

# DUSTOFF CREWS OF THE VIETNAM WAR CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 2825 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2825) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Cornyn substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2066) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act".

## SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) a United States Army Dustoff crewman, including a pilot, crew chief, and medic, is a helicopter crew member who served honorably during the Vietnam War aboard helicopter air ambulances, which were both non-division and division assets under the radio call signs "Dustoff" and "Medevac";

(2) Dustoff crews performed aeromedical evacuation for United States, Vietnamese, and allied forces in Southeast Asia from May 1962 through March 1973;

(3) nearing the end of World War II, the United States Army began using helicopters for medical evacuation and years later, during the Korean War, these helicopter air ambulances were responsible for transporting 17,700 United States casualties;

(4) during the Vietnam War, with the use of helicopter air ambulances, United States Army Dustoff crews pioneered the concept of dedicated and rapid medical evacuation and transported almost 900,000 United States, South Vietnamese, and other allied sick and wounded, as well as wounded enemy forces;

(5) helicopters proved to be a revolutionary tool to assist those injured on the battlefield;

(6) highly skilled and intrepid, Dustoff crews were able to operate the helicopters and land them on almost any terrain in nearly any weather to pick up wounded, after which the Dustoff crews could provide care to these patients while transporting them to ready medical facilities;

(7) the vital work of the Dustoff crews required consistent combat exposure and often proved to be the difference between life and death for wounded personnel;

(8) the revolutionary concept of a dedicated combat life-saving system was cultivated and refined by United States Army Dustoff crews during 11 years of intense conflict in and above the jungles of Southeast Asia;

(9) innovative and resourceful Dustoff crews in Vietnam were responsible for taking the new concept of helicopter medical evacuation, born just a few years earlier, and revolutionizing it to meet and surpass the previously unattainable goal of delivering a battlefield casualty to an operating table within the vaunted "golden hour";

(10) some Dustoff units in Vietnam operated so efficiently that they were able to deliver a patient to a waiting medical facility on an average of 50 minutes from the receipt of the mission, which saved the lives of countless personnel in Vietnam, and this legacy continues for modern-day Dustoff crews;

(11) the inherent danger of being a member of a Dustoff crew in Vietnam meant that there was a 1 in 3 chance of being wounded or killed;

(12) many battles during the Vietnam War raged at night, and members of the Dustoff crews often found themselves searching for a landing zone in complete darkness, in bad weather, over mountainous terrain, and all while being the target of intense enemy fire as they attempted to rescue the wounded, which caused Dustoff crews to suffer a rate of aircraft loss that was more than 3 times that of all other types of combat helicopter missions in Vietnam;

(13) the 54th Medical Detachment typified the constant heroism displayed by Dustoff crews in Vietnam, over the span of a 10-month tour, with only 3 flyable helicopters and 40 soldiers in the unit, evacuating 21,435 patients in 8,644 missions while being airborne for 4,832 hours;

(14) collectively, the members of the 54th Medical Detachment earned 78 awards for valor, including 1 Medal of Honor, 1 Distinguished Service Cross, 14 Silver Star Medals, 26 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 2 Bronze Star Medals for valor, 4 Air Medals for valor, 4 Soldier's Medals, and 26 Purple Heart Medals;

(15) the 54th Medical Detachment displayed heroism on a daily basis and set the standard for all Dustoff crews in Vietnam;

(16) 6 members of the 54th Medical Detachment are in the Dustoff Hall of Fame, 3 are in the Army Aviation Hall of Fame, and 1 is the only United States Army aviator in the National Aviation Hall of Fame;

(17) Dustoff crew members are among the most highly decorated soldiers in United States military history;

(18) in early 1964, Major Charles L. Kelly was the Commanding Officer of the 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), Provisional, in Soc Trang, South Vietnam;

(19) Major Kelly helped to forge the Dustoff call sign into history as one of the most welcomed phrases to be heard over the radio by wounded soldiers in perilous and dire situations;

(20) in 1964, Major Kelly was killed in action as he gallantly maneuvered his aircraft to save a wounded United States soldier and several Vietnamese soldiers and boldly replied, after being warned to stay away from the landing zone due to the ferocity of enemy fire, "When I have your wounded.";

(21) General William Westmoreland, Commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam from 1964 to 1968, singled out Major Kelly as an example of "the greatness of the human spirit" and highlighted his famous reply as an inspiration to all in combat;

(22) General Creighton Abrams, successor to General Westmoreland from 1968 to 1972, and former Chief of Staff of the United

States Army, highlighted the heroism of Dustoff crews, "A special word about the Dustoffs . . . Courage above and beyond the call of duty was sort of routine to them. It was a daily thing, part of the way they lived. That's the great part, and it meant so much to every last man who served there. Whether he ever got hurt or not, he knew Dustoff was there.";

(23) Dustoff crews possessed unique skills and traits that made them highly successful in aeromedical evacuation in Vietnam, including indomitable courage, extraordinary aviation skill and sound judgment under fire, high-level medical expertise, and an unequaled dedication to the preservation of human life;

(24) members of the United States Armed Forces on the ground in Vietnam had their confidence and battlefield prowess reinforced knowing that there were heroic Dustoff crews just a few minutes from the fight, which was instrumental to their well-being, willingness to fight, and morale;

(25) military families in the United States knew that their loved ones would receive the quickest and best possible care in the event of a war-time injury, thanks to the Dustoff crews;

(26) the willingness of Dustoff crews to also risk their lives to save helpless civilians left an immeasurably positive impression on the people of Vietnam and exemplified the finest United States ideals of compassion and humanity; and

(27) Dustoff crews from the Vietnam War hailed from every State in the United States and represented numerous ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

## SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service, which saved countless lives and contributed directly to the defense of the United States.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

(c) U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT MUSEUM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War, the gold medal shall be given to the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum, where it will be available for display as appropriate and available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum should make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly at appropriate locations associated with the Vietnam War, and that preference should be given to locations affiliated with the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum.

## SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

## SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDAL.—Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for

purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

**SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.**

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The bill (S. 2825), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

**AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR THE NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL SERVICE AND THE NATIONAL HONOR GUARD AND PIPE BAND EXHIBITION**

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 83, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 83) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 83) was agreed to.

**SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF APRIL 29 THROUGH MAY 3, 2024, AS NATIONAL SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL APPRECIATION WEEK**

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 683, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 683) supporting the designation of the week of April 29 through May 3, 2024, as "National Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Appreciation Week".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 683) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

**MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 7109**

Mr. SCHUMER. I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 7109) to require a citizenship question on the decennial census, to require reporting on certain census statistics, and to modify apportionment of Representatives to be based on United States citizens instead of all individuals.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar, under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

**SIGNING AUTHORITY**

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the senior Senator from Hawaii be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions from May 9, 2024, through May 13, 2024.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2024, THROUGH TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. And, finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned to convene for a pro forma session only, with no business being conducted, on Friday, May 10, at 6:30 p.m.; further, that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Tuesday, May 14; that on Tuesday, following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the O'Donnell nomination; further, that the cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 6:30 P.M. TOMORROW**

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:02 p.m., adjourned until Friday, May 10, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

**NOMINATIONS**

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

SHANNON A. ESTENOZ, OF FLORIDA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, VICE TOMMY P. BEAUDREAU, RESIGNED.

**UNITED STATES TAX COURT**

JEFFREY SAMUEL ARBETT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE MICHAEL B. THORNTON, RESIGNED.

CATHY FUNG, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE JOSEPH H. GALE, RETIRED.

BENJAMIN A. GUIDER III, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE RICHARD T. MORRISON, TERM EXPIRED.

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

CHRISTOPHER J. LAMORA, OF RHODE ISLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC.

DAVID SLAYTON MEALE, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH.